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JULY, 2004.



ROAD TRIP

To McCarthy and Kennicott



The Memorial Day weekend offered the opportunity for Jan and me to get out of Fairbanks. Our plan called for driving to Delta Junction, and then heading south to Valdez.

We arrived in Delta Junction about noon, and visited the newly restored Sullivan Roadhouse. This roadhouse was originally on the winter trail (the Donnelly-Washburn Cut-Off) from Fairbanks to Valdez. This portion of the trail was only used in the winter during the frozen months. It was shorter than the summer trail by two days. The Roadhouse was disassembled, moved to Delta Junction, and reassembled. The move was funded by the U.S. Army Legacy Fund. We left Delta Junction about 2PM.

At this time, we had the thought that we had lived in Alaska for almost 30 years, and had never been to McCarthy and Kennicott. In the past, the road from Chitina to McCarthy has had the reputation of being one of the worst roads in the state. Since it was early in the season, we thought that maybe the road would be in decent shape. Our instincts were correct. The road was in excellent condition, and it took us less than two hours to drive the 60 or so miles from Chitina to the foot bridge at the end of the road. We arrived at about 8PM. But this being Alaska, darkness at this time of year was not a problem.

The road does not quite reach McCarthy. The road ends, and there is a foot bridge and about a ½ mile walk to McCarthy. At the end of the road is a parking lot. The fee for parking is \$10 per calendar day. There is just something wrong about driving 60 miles, and having to pay to get out of your car. Now I have no quarrel with free enterprise, and this is private land. But there is just something wrong with having the option of paying \$10, or driving back 60 miles. We paid the fee for two days, knowing that we could have gone back up the road about a half mile, and paid \$5 per day.

The foot bridge replaces a hand-pulled tram that used to serve as the transportation to get across the Kennicott River. It is then just a short walk over another, shorter foot bridge, and then up hill to McCarthy. We walked directly to the



Johnson Hotel. I had previously talked with the owner about the tokens used by this establishment in the early days. Neil Darrish just grinned when I asked how many tokens would get us a night's stay. A trade was arranged that was acceptable to both of us. Neil and his partner Doug Miller, are restoring several buildings and making big plans for the centennial in 2006.

Most of the other buildings are showing severe signs of age. Besides those owned by Neil and Doug, the only others that



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EDITOR'S COMMENTS

It's a beautiful day in June as I write this. Except it is going to hit 90° and we don't have air conditioning in the store. And, the forest fires are raging north and east of town (Fairbanks is in no danger), so the sun has been reduced to an orange ball. The smoke is as thick as a smoky bar! Ironically, the City Council will vote tonight on banning smoking in private businesses, except bars (where it is obviously the worst).

While I don't smoke, and cannot be around tobacco smoke for any length of time without getting a migraine, I must admit that it is tempting to support this issue. However, they are private businesses, and should be able to allow or ban smoking as they wish, to their financial benefit or detriment.

When I first took over the store in 1976, one of my first acts was to post a no smoking sign. Almost thirty years ago, I would have to advise people who walked in smoking that it was not permitted. Some left in a huff (of smoke no less), while others respected my wishes.

I cannot remember the last time I had to tell some one that smoking was not permitted in our store. Things have changed greatly in these 28 years. A "no smoking" sign is hardly needed.

Legislative action infringing upon the rights of private businesses is not the answer.

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PRICES REALIZED

Selected prices realized from eBay:

Anchorage , Union Club, 12½¢, B-37a	80.97
Bering River , H. P. Co., B-1a	65.00OB
Chisana , Anderton, 25¢, B-1a	OB15.00NB
Cordova , Carscadden's, 6¼¢, B-6a	224.72
Cordova , Horseshoe, 6¼¢, B-19a	65.00OB
Cordova , Little, One Drink, unl.	1,300.00
Cordova , Old Crow, 6¼¢, B-31a	76.00
Ellamar , E. Mining Co., 10¢, B-1a	228.76
Excursion Inlet , A&PSCCo., \$1, B-1e	80.00OB
Fairbanks , Masonic, engraved, B-33c	82.88
Fairbanks , Nevada Bar, 5¢, B-37a	OB15.00NB
Fairbanks , Northern, 50¢, no "Fairbanks"	1,225.00
Fairbanks , Pioneer Hotel, 5¢, B-45ai	OB20.00NB
Fairbanks , Pioneer Hotel, 25¢, B-45c	OB20.00NB
Fort Davis , Post Exchange 10¢ al. unl.	1,600.00
Fort Yukon , FY Hotel, Bread B-4b	113.61
Hoonah , Icy Straits, \$1, B-2d	OB35.00NB
Juneau , Burford's, 50¢, B-12c	OB50.00NB
Juneau , Elk's Club, 12½¢, B-19b	OB60.00NB
Juneau , McCloskey's, 12½¢, B-45a	915.12
Juneau , Garnick encased, h/s	OB40.00NB
Juneau , Allman Silversides, copper	35.00OB
Ketchikan , Artic Club, \$1, B-4b	55.00OB
Ketchikan , Blue Fox Pup, \$1, B-6e	OB20.00NB
Ketchikan , Budweiser, 10¢	795.00
Ketchikan , Katchikan Pharm., 5¢, B-22a	46.00
Ketchikan , Lange's, 10¢, B-29a	25.00OB
Ketchikan , Lange's, \$1, B-29c	OB30.00NB
Ketchikan , Lange's, \$1, B-29d	RLOB20.00NB
Ketchikan , Lotus Buffet, 6¼¢, B-31b	45.00OB
Ketchikan , Nelson Hotel, \$1, B-34b	OB30.00NB
Ketchikan , Pioneer, 25¢, B-42b	OB45.00NB
Ketchikan , Stedman, 12½¢, B-60aii	OB15.00NB
Ketchikan , Stedman, 12½¢, B-60bi	OB30.00NB
Ketchikan , Stedman, 12½¢, B-60bii	35.00OB
Ketchikan , Stedman, 25¢, B-60c	OB35.00NB
Ketchikan , Sloten's, 5¢, B-58a	168.06
Kobuk , Brown, set of 3, B-1, a-c	30.00OB
Nenana , Paul Lescure, \$5, unlisted	1,183.12
Nome , The Columbia, 1 Drink, B-17a	OB250.00NB
Palmer , ARRC 5¢, B-1b	41.00
Palmer , ARRC 10¢, B-1c	42.02
Seward , The Palace, 12½¢, B-9b	83.32
Skagway , J.F. Anderson, 6¼¢, B-1a	283.49
Skagway , BoT, 6¼¢, B-4bII	170.99
Skagway , FOE Aerie 25, 25¢, B-9a	25.00OB
Skagway , McCr & Elliot, 10¢, B-16b	OB9.99NB

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ROAD TRIP, CONT.

appeared to be in current use were those used by the tour operators. Flying tours and hiking tours are available, as is ice climbing.

The next morning, Jan and I decided to walk the 4.5 miles to Kennicott. The road (from Chitina to the foot bridge, and from McCarthy to Kennicott) is on the old railroad rail bed of the Copper River & Northwestern Railway. Not three minutes into our walk, Jan looked down and picked up a date spike. These were small spikes that were driven into the ties with a two digit date to indicate when the tie had last been replaced. And next to it was a spike used to connect the rails to the tie. A neat souvenir, I thought. Well, two hours, 28 spikes and I don't know how many pounds later, we arrived in Kennicott. **One of these historic spikes can be yours for \$7.50, postpaid.**

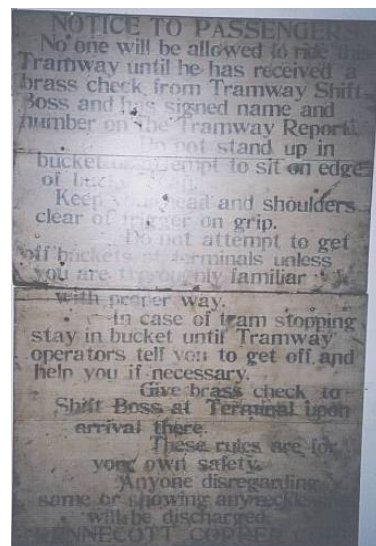
The Kennicott mine is built on the side of a mountain at about 2,000 feet. The buildings are showing severe signs of decay, with the exception of those that have been restored. Kennicott is interesting in that much of it is privately owned, while the rest is owned by the National Park Service. The debate is whether to let the rest of the buildings continue in the natural process to decay and collapse,



or to restore them. If the NPS had their way, they would allow them to disintegrate. After all, they blew up (yes, with explosives) a mine in Denali National Park that the University of Alaska used as a teaching lab. Fortunately, it seems the current feeling is that the buildings should be stabilized, and then restored.

We walked the length of the mine site, but did not do much exploring. A guide is really needed for that, and we did not have the time to wait for the next tour.

We walked back to where we could catch a shuttle bus back to McCarthy. When the shuttle arrived, the passengers were all excited. They had seen three bears on the drive out. That would be three bears on the road we had just walked an hour or so earlier!



Back in McCarthy, we visited the small museum that was now open. There was a nice diorama of the town, showing how it was originally laid out, and showing the business names on some of the buildings. There were also many historical photos.

Of particular interest was the sign shown above. It reads:

"Notice to Passengers:

No one will be allowed to ride the Tramway until he has received a brass check from Tramway Shift Boss and has signed name and number on the Tramway Report.

ROAD TRIP, CONT.

Do not stand up in the bucket or attempt to sit on edge of bucket.

Keep your head and shoulders clear of the trigger gear.

Do not attempt to get off buckets at terminals unless you are thoroughly familiar with the proper way.

In case of tram stopping stay in bucket until Tramway operators tell you to get off and help you if necessary.

Give brass check to Shift Boss at Terminal upon arrival there.

These rules are for your own safety.

Anyone disregarding same or showing any recklessness will be discharged.

KENNECOTT COPPER CORP.

Two mentions of “brass checks” on one sign! Could this be the use of B-C7a, shown below?



By then it was time to head back to Fairbanks. Jan had to work on Memorial Day (she works at the Georgeson Botanical Garden at UAF, and a farmer’s work is never done).

We returned to our car, only to find a flat tire. We found the culprit. Was it a railroad spike or a date spike? No, it was a sheet metal screw. Had it gone into the tread, it would not have been a problem, but it had lodged in the groove between the treads. The folks that own the parking lot also provided tire repair service. We had the tire plugged so we would have that to fall back on should we pick up another flat on the way out.

Driving out from McCarthy was a smooth trip that took a little over two hours (I slowed down after seeing all the railroad spikes on our walk). Arriving in Chitina, I stopped at Uncle Tom’s bar to see if they had any drink tokens, but was disappointed.

Our next stop was Ron Simpson’s Copper Rail Depot bar in Copper Center. While Ron does not use tokens either, this stop is a must for any traveler. Ron is the author of “Legacy of the Chief,” a combination of oral

tradition and historical account of the region, including Kennicott and McCarthy. But the reason for stopping is Ron’s diorama of the Copper River & Northwestern Railway, including the towns of Chitina, McCarthy and the Kennicott Mine site. Running from the bar to an outdoor area with the diorama in covered shelters, Ron has taken the reconstruction very seriously, except for the “Bate’s Motel”. It is quite impressive, obsessive and obviously a labor of love.

After leaving Ron’s, we stopped at the Sourdough Roadhouse. The original roadhouse burned down a few years ago, and it is good to see that they are rebuilding. While the construction is modern, the tradition of the roadhouse will continue. Their main customers are sport fishers trying their luck for salmon in the Gulkana River.



Continuing north, we took a short side trip up the Tok Cut-off about 2 miles to the Gakona Roadhouse. While the roadhouse looked closed, the Trappers Den bar was open, and I finally got lucky and picked up a wooden drink token. It is printed in red.

Backtracking to the Richardson Highway, we continued to the Paxson Lodge at the intersection with the Denali Highway. We stayed long enough to have burgers, but there were no tokens.

After our stop in Paxson, it was just a long drive home. Looking back on the trip, while disappointing numismatically, I know that we will have to go back to McCarthy again. I need to bring a metal detector. I am sure there is a Priesner gold nugget token just waiting to be found. And, I just have this feeling that Neil needs one, so a sale should not be too difficult. Also, we did not have the time to hike up to the Bonanza Mine at 6,000 feet. Copper nuggets can be found there, and we need one for our indoor garden.

Ed. Note. While the company spelled it Kennecott, the local, accepted spelling for the town is Kennicott.

PRICES REALIZED, CONT.

Skagway, McCr&Elliot, 25¢, B-16c	15.50
Skagway, McCr&Elliot, \$5, B-16f	OB40.00NB
Skagway, Seattle Saloon, 12½¢, B-23ai	86.00
Skagway, Shooting Gallery, 10¢, B-25b	53.21
Thane, AGM Co. CR, 12½¢, B-1a	OB15.00NB
Tonsina, Nafsted, 12½¢, B-1a	43.50
Valdez, Buffet, 12½¢, B-4b	OB40.00NB
Yes Bay, APF, 5¢, B-3a	OB50.00NB
AYPE ¼ DWT	88.78
AYPE 3 pc gold set	600.00
AYPE 3 pc gold set	565.00
Alaska Gold, ½ Pinch 1899	withdrawn
Alaska Gold, ½ Pinch 1900	withdrawn
Alaska Gold, Parka Head One 1911	withdrawn
Dawson, YT, 25¢ copper plug only	11.59
Tierra del Fuego, 1 Gramo	805.00
Tierra del Fuego, 5 Gramos	3450.00

OB = Opening Bid NB = No Bid RL = relist
 RNM = Reserve Not Met R = Reserve
 BIN = Buy it now

FROM THE LYN KNIGHT SALE, JUNE 11-12

Salchaket B-1d, 50¢ scrip	9,200.00
FNB of Juneau \$10, type 2, uncirculated	39,600.00
FNB of Ketchikan \$5, type 1, VF	13,225.00
FNB of Ketchikan \$20, type 1, VG discolored	9,478.50

The Salchaket scrip sold to a non-Alaskan at the show who outbid a phone bidder. Interestingly, there was another specimen at the bourse. This was a known specimen with the Munson signature missing. The dealer was taking offers, but did not sell it.

(submitted by Ron Benice)

* * * * *

PRESIDENT REAGAN/POPE JOHN PAUL II



Unfortunately, it did not work out that way. When the people arrived, they all crowded as close to the stage as possible, bundled up in coats and blankets, sat down, and waited. The vendors were in the back, and we had very few customers. They did not want to vacate their space on the tarmac.

With the passing of President Reagan, it is time to trot out a few items again.



On May 1, 1984, President Reagan arrived in Fairbanks and spent the night. The next morning, Pope John Paul II arrived. The two met in the airport terminal and then departed. It was a cold and snowy morning as approximately 10,000 people gather to hear both speak.

In preparation for this event, we had struck one ounce silver medals. I set up at the event, prepared to make a fortune.



One ounce silver medal (above left)	30.00
Set of 4 elongated cents by Bert Samsa	12.00
Wooden Nickel, printed in red	1.00
Postage and handling per order	3.00
or SASE for the wooden nickel only	

Send orders to: ARC, P.O. Box 72832, Fairbanks, Alaska 99707

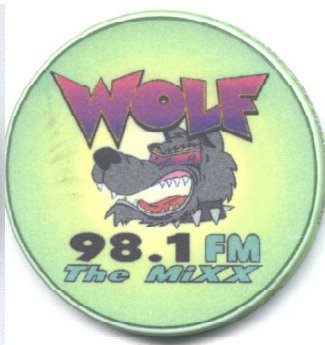
FOR THE RECORD



CORDOVA: J.W. Little, Good For 1 Drink. Aluminum, 25mm (eBay PR\$1,300)



FAIRBANKS: Northern Hotel & Pool Room, 50¢ in trade, no city name. Brass with aluminum center, 32mm (eBay PR\$1,225).



(FAIRBANKS): Subway/98.1.FM, redeemable for one free salad. Multicolored, predominantly green and yellow, 44mm. Edge marked "Redeemable for new salad" three times. Heavy plastic like a modern gaming chip.



FAIRBANKS: Alaska Goldpanners, Midnight Sun Baseball Game, June 21, 2004, 99th annual baseball game played at midnight. Brass, 34mm.



FORT DAVIS: Post Exchange, 10¢ in trade. Aluminum, 33mm. Lew Egnew wrote an article about Fort Davis for the August 1979 issue, illustrating the 5¢ token. We first reported a 10¢ struck in brass in the September 1983 issue on page 42. A better illustration can be found in the February 1995 issue in a short article by Alan Weinberg on page 7. The reverse (10¢ side) of this token is different from the brass 10¢ previously reported. Sold on eBay, PR \$1,600.



NENANA: Paul Lescure & Co., \$5 in trade. Brass, 24mm (eBay PR\$1183.12).

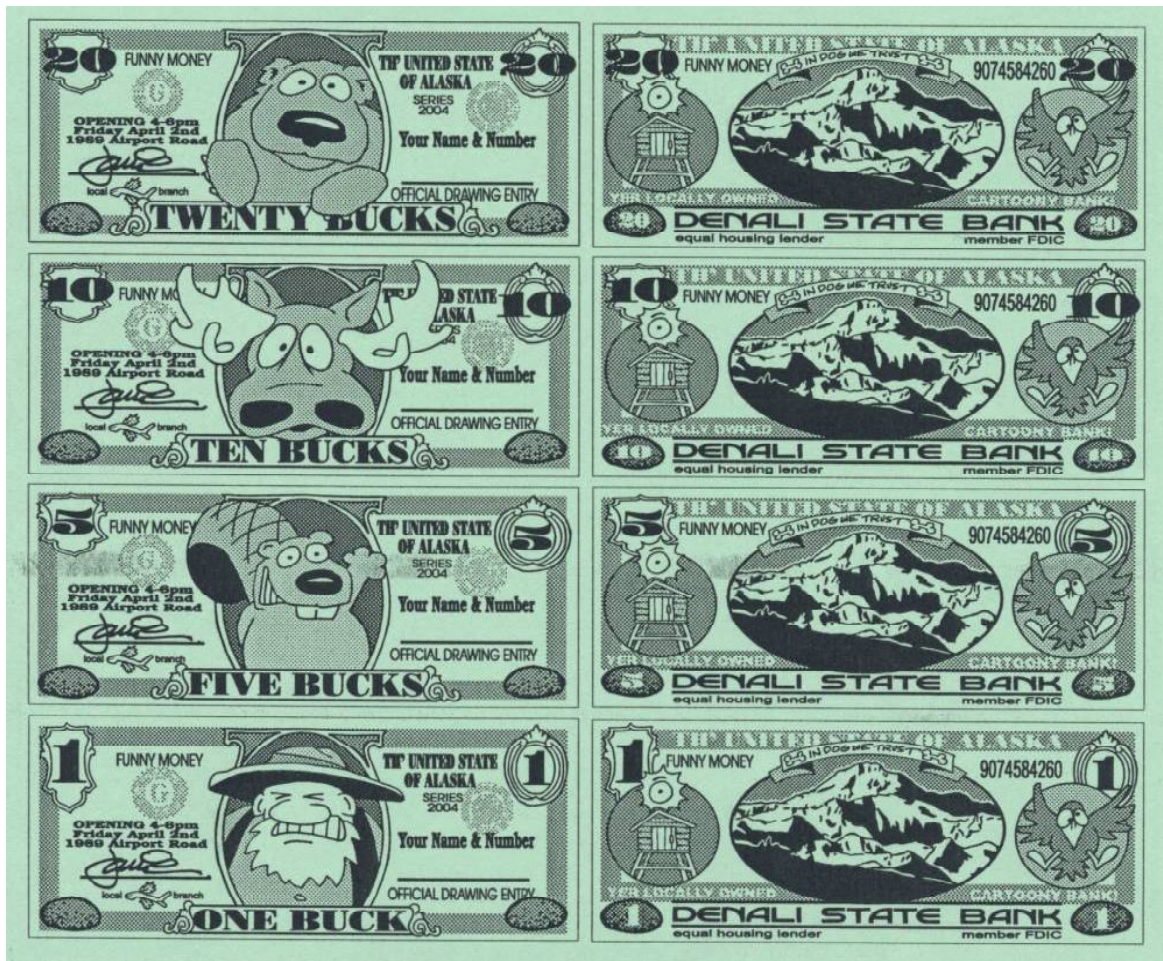


WASILLA: The Furbers Green Acres Resort, wooden nickel. Black on wood.



ALASKA: DEW Line Operation, 1957. Reverse reads: "Network of radar stations from Alaska and Canada to Greenland was set up to give early warning of a Soviet bomber attack. However it soon became obsolete with the creation of long range missiles." Sterling silver, 39mm by the Danbury Mint, part of their American History series.

FUNNY MONEY



Local artist/cartoonist Jaime Smyth had an “opening” at Denali State Bank on April 2nd. As part of this opening, he designed some “funny money” to be used as entry tickets for a drawing. All four denominations are shown above. They are printed black on light green. Actual size is about 152mm by 70mm. The funny money features characters from his weekly cartoon strip that appears in the Heartland section of the Sunday Fairbanks Daily News-Miner.

FREE SALMON

Valdez is giving away free salmon this summer. The catch is that you must go to Beaver Creek, Yukon to get the coupon!

Your associate editor stopped at Buck Shot Betty’s and picked up a coupon, avoiding banishment to the wilds of the lower 48. Black on salmon (what else?), actual size approximately 215mm by 92mm

